

ESDR 21st Annual Meeting

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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS BY GUNHILD VEJLSGAARD

Honorable guests, dear colleagues:

Research will increasingly form the basis of the society of the future. If we want to influence our existence, we will have to consider research really seriously. This can only be done by political long-term research decisions that ensure stability for the research in many years.

Do we utilize the resources in the right way?

Should we concentrate on a few selected areas?

Have we organized the research correctly?

And do we control it in the best possible way?

How do we create mobility among the European scientists in order to create more international science?

This is important to obtain a better quality of science. How do we ensure that the scientists live up to the necessary demands of quality?

Western European research is increasingly under the auspices of the European Economic Community research programs. This makes it more difficult for smaller institutions and smaller countries, something we should be aware of. Larger research centers are necessary to obtain good quality science. A scientific institution should have a certain size that creates a fruitful scientific environment. A scientific institution should be large enough to be able to educate new scientists and to be able to have workshops, seminars, etc.

The changes in the East European countries will in the future play an important role for scientific evolution. Many European countries have so far established larger scientific centers to obtain better quality science, but in the U.S.A. these progressive institutions have been established for some years.

The formalized international research collaboration is organized through several international programs. So far not much medical science has been organized through international programs.

What is really the ideal size of a scientific unit? Like musicians in an orchestra, the members of a lab should play very well together. Their symphonies include occasional solos, but every player is crucial to the overall performance. Many factors influence the evolution of a successful group of scientists. It is important to encourage people to collaborate and interact and help each other. It is important to make sure that everyone has his or her own identity, has something to really believe in, and feels that it is one's own work. A scientific laboratory is continuously changing, depending on the people working in it. A scientific lab should include a mixture of scientific backgrounds including whatever interests are available. The diverse activity should be overseen by a conductor who can be successful even though he/she does not know how to play each instrument in his/her orchestra. Some of us were playing the piano or violin and suddenly have become conductors. I think we all feel it is fun being a conductor, but so very often one wishes that on the side one were able still to just be playing the solo instrument now and then.

This year we are having the 21st meeting of the European Society for Dermatological Research. It is the first time the meeting has been held in a Nordic country. In reaching this milestone the meetings have managed to reverse the ageing process, for, if anything,

the vitality has increased with time. Over the last two decades the ESDR meetings have evolved into the premier European dermatologic scientific forum. The format of the meetings is changing currently. As an example we do not have workshops this year. Every year a new program committee ensures a high scientific standard combined with new input. It is the aim of these meetings for European dermatologic scientists to present results and gain immediate feedback on their latest experiments and ideas. It is the aim that people will critically review each other's experiments. The casual atmosphere encourages people to talk on new ideas without hesitation. The ESDR board is in a continuous process of evaluating the meetings, ensuring that science marches onward and that our meetings will keep in step. It has been a bonus that the ESDR has demonstrated its willingness to venture into new geographic territories around Europe.

For all members, the ESDR's nerve is the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*. The JID is the most important cornerstone for the ESDR. The JID has over the decades evolved into a world-premier dermatologic scientific forum. The JID is to all European dermatologic scientists enhancing our knowledge of our field and our ability to do science. The JID has an outstanding reputation; it is highly praised by all dermatologists all over the world. The JID refers to the brain trust of dermatology today. The JID has developed over the last years under the editorship of David Norris, and high impact manuscripts, rapid communications, and review articles have been welcomed. The JID will always be the journal of the ESDR. For all of us it is a great privilege to work with the editors of the JID and it is an honor and a privilege to have scientific results published in the JID.

The European Society for Dermatological Research, with the JID as its most important cornerstone, will succeed in creating a society that will show its vitality and further evolve to be of great benefit for European scientists in collaboration across European borders and with other countries of the world.



Figure 1. President Gunhild Vejlsgaard.